



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**March 17 2006**

CONTACT: C. Chic Smith

301-443-1592 office / 202-689-4885 cell

Email: [csmith@ahrq.gov](mailto:csmith@ahrq.gov) / Web site: [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov)

## **NATIONAL HEALTH CARE DISCUSSION COMES TO PHOENIX**

*Citizens' recommendations to be considered by Congress, White House*

**Washington, D.C.** –The Citizens' Health Care Working Group will host a community dialogue on health care in America in Phoenix, AZ on **Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**, from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. The community meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 2532 W. Peoria Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85029. This event is free and open to the public, but registration is requested. Registration is available online at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov). Onsite registration is also available.

This community meeting is one of more than 30 taking place throughout the nation. The meeting will feature a multimedia presentation that provides information on the nation's health care system including problems related to cost, quality, and access to care. Participants will engage in small group discussions and share ideas about how to improve the health care system.

"Listening to communities identify what works and what does not work in health care is at the core of what the President and Congress have asked us to do," stated Rosie Perez, a registered nurse who is Vice President of Mission Integration and Outreach Services in San Antonio, Texas and a member of the Working Group.

Community members, especially those unable to come to the meeting are urged to take advantage of several important online features designed to expand citizen participation beyond the community meetings. The Public Comment Center, Citizens' Blogs, and Discussion Forums, are found at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov) and were designed so that citizens can share their opinions with one another and make their views known to the Working Group.

The Working Group, a nonpartisan group authorized by the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, is charged with listening to the views of the American people and developing recommendations for the President and Congress to provide U.S. citizens with "Health Care that Works for All Americans." The *Health Report to the American People*, was released in October and serves as a basis to engage the American people in a dialogue on health care access, cost and quality issues. The Working Group consists of 15 members --14 citizens of diverse backgrounds from across the country, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

###